



### A LETTER ▶ FROM RALPH MARTIN

Your Present Circumstances  
PAGE 3

What Would Monica Do?  
PAGE 4

Mission to St. Vincent  
& the Grenadines  
PAGE 6

Event Calendar  
PAGE 8

Ralph with his fall 2024  
Sacred Heart Major  
Seminary class.

### Friends and Fellow Disciples,

I continue to be deeply moved as I sign thank you letters to the many of you who have supported us—some for only the past month, and some for more than forty years! It's both amazing and humbling.

As usual, there is a lot going on—thanks be to God! So much great work for the kingdom is being made possible through your support!

The class I taught during the fall semester at the seminary was perhaps my best class ever, both regarding how I conducted it and—primarily—regarding the amazing twenty-two men and one woman who comprised the class. All except four of the students were transitional deacons who will be ordained to the priesthood in just a couple months. What good men they are, and what good priests they will make!

Archbishop Allen Vigneron invited all the Sacred Heart Major Seminary faculty and their spouses to a wonderful Christmas reception with him at his home near the seminary. Given all the chaos, confusion, and division going on in the Church, it has been a special blessing to have Archbishop Vigneron give his protection to the seminary and me personally all these years.

As it turned out, the Christmas reception was the last time I saw Archbishop Vigneron



Ralph and Anne with Archbishop Allen Vigneron shortly before Christmas.

before his retirement. The pope appointed the Diocese of Tucson's Bishop Edward Weisenburger as the new archbishop of the Archdiocese of Detroit, and his installation ceremony was in March.

On the mission front, our time in Ukraine last summer is bearing ongoing fruit! A

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



wonderful Ukrainian couple translated my booklet *Priest as Prophet* into Ukrainian in order to make it available to Ukrainian priests.

Also, one of our close friends at the seminary, Fr. Peter Ryan, SJ, and I each gave a talk at the annual meeting of the National Federation of Seminary Spiritual Directors in Columbus, Ohio. While there, we ran into Fr. Earl Mueller, who served with us on mission in Africa for many years and now serves at a seminary in New Orleans. He even learned Swahili to be better able to communicate with those we served in Africa! So many wonderful people have served with us on mission in so many countries over the years!

I also want to give a special shout out to our dear Canadian friends. Anne and I traveled to Windsor, Ontario, to give a talk at a parish where one of the seminary's lay theology graduates is serving as director of religious education. It was great to see a team of lay leaders and the priests working so well together to lead their parish in renewal and evangelization. It also was great to see our lay graduate putting her theology studies to such good use!

One significant new development in Renewal Ministries' outreach has been an explosion of requests for Peter and Debbie Herbeck to speak at events for married couples. They had been doing many of them but ran into a setback when Peter fell on the ice in his drive-



Ralph spoke at a parish in Windsor, Ontario, where a Sacred Heart Major Seminary graduate is serving as director of religious education.

way in February (the dangers of living in Michigan) and cracked his pelvis in two places. Fortunately, the bones were not displaced, but he did need about a two-month recovery period, which he is only now emerging from.

One large event Peter had to miss was a mission in Brazil that he was scheduled to lead. Fortunately, Pete Burak and Rachel Herbeck were still able to go. Speaking of Rachel, have you heard her new podcast, *Burning Hearts*, yet? If not, you should. She's got the fire! Check out page three for a condensed version of a recent episode and details on how to access the program.

To stay regularly updated on what we are teaching and preaching, subscribe to our YouTube channel and click the notification bell to be notified when a new video is published. I love walking from my "prayer chair" over to my microphone and camera to share what the Lord is putting on my heart to help strengthen and encourage you. It's a privilege.

Your brother in Christ,

*Ralph Martin*  
Ralph

This couple had Ralph's book *Priest as Prophet* translated into Ukrainian to share with priests.



Ralph with Fr. Earl Mueller, who served with us on many missions and now works at a seminary in New Orleans.



# Your Present Circumstances

BURNING HEARTS | CONDENSED FROM EPISODE 27



In *Burning Hearts*, a new program from Renewal Ministries that launched in mid-January, host Rachel Herbeck uses the Scriptures to draw us into a deeply intimate conversation with the Lord. She asks us to consider two questions:

**What is God saying to us?**

— & —

**What are we doing about it?**

Rachel helps listeners discover how to make their own road-map through the Word of God so that He can set their hearts on fire with zeal for his Word.



## Listen to *Burning Hearts*

*Burning Hearts* is available on Renewal Ministries' website at [www.renewalministries.net/burninghearts](http://www.renewalministries.net/burninghearts) or anywhere you access podcasts.

What are your present circumstances? Are you in a season where you are feeling God's love a lot? Are you in a season of suffering? In Philippians, St. Paul tells us his circumstances and how he responds to them in the power of the Holy Spirit:

*I want you to know, brethren, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ; and most of the brethren have been made confident in the Lord because of my imprisonment, and are much more bold to speak the word of God without fear.*

(Phil 1:12-14)

Paul is in jail. He's being persecuted for telling people about Jesus. But being in prison has helped him spread the Gospel. The whole Roman guard, which he did not previously have access to, is now hearing the Word of God.

**Often, when I consider my circumstances, my mind goes to the negative things first. But if Paul's suffering can advance the Gospel, so can mine.**

Last week, I was at a coffee shop with somebody in Ann Arbor, Michigan—which is a very secular city. The tables were so close to each other that your elbows could touch the person next to you. I was having a deep conversation on the truth about human sexuality, marriage, and offering our lives as a gift and a sacrifice. When we left, my friend pointed out that the person next to

me was looking at me and making a face every time I spoke, as if to say, "I can't believe she believes that." My friend said I should be careful about what I discuss in situations like that.

**My initial response was a fear of men: "I hope that person wasn't thinking badly of me." But then the Lord reminded me not to be ashamed of the Gospel. St. Paul didn't fear men; in fact, he expected persecution and suffering. His focus was not on his own suffering, but on the fact that it allowed him to share the Gospel with a new group of people.**

We too can choose to give our circumstances to God and allow Him to bring good out of them. Consider St. Paul's situation, which empowers other believers to speak the word more boldly. How we proclaim the Gospel amid suffering, persecution, and difficulties is a powerful witness to those who don't believe. Furthermore, it sows the seed of faith in those walking alongside us. It gives power, encouragement, and strength to fellow believers.

**St. Paul does not let his circumstances define him. He isn't brought down by suffering; he allows God to use it, and as a result, the Word of God goes out more boldly.**

The darkness is strong in today's world. But what if Christ put us in this time—when the Church has lost its money, power, and influence—so that we can rise above our suffering to advance the Gospel? May the Lord give you the courage to advance his Word, even when it's hard.



How we proclaim the Gospel amid suffering, persecution, and difficulties is a powerful witness to those who don't believe.

# What Would MONICA Do?

The following article is condensed from a 2025 *The Choices We Face* episode called *What Would Monica Do?* with Patti Maguire Armstrong. You can watch the original interview at [https://youtu.be/bX\\_swlpck\\_0](https://youtu.be/bX_swlpck_0). ➔

Patti is an award-winning author, journalist, and blogger. She co-authored *What Would Monica Do?*, which discusses praying for and loving those away from the faith. Patti lives in North Dakota and has ten children.



## DISCOVERING THE FAITH

I met my husband, Mark, in the Peace Corps in the Marshall Islands. Mark died on May 11, 2024. We were married almost forty-three years, and it was a day and fifteen minutes before his sixty-eighth birthday.

When we met, we were we were both Catholics who thought we were good people because we went to Mass sometimes. We were not well catechized. Then we became Jesuit volunteers on an Indian reservation, ran a group home for delinquent boys, and started having children.

Mark and I were partners in adventure. When things got tough, we turned

our life over to God and started practicing our faith. However, first we had to learn it! We learned that you can't miss Mass on Sundays; we learned to pray the rosary. The adventure began in such a beautiful way. I wrote for the secular media—ten years with *Women's World* and some time with the *National Enquirer*. But as I grew in my faith, I realized they don't care about people or help anyone. Even though we needed the money—we always did, with raising kids and me staying home—we just went deeper in our faith, and things started to straighten out. We fought less, and when we did, we were more cordial. We started praying for each other.

I began to understand that when you turn back to the Church, you don't immediately go from point A to point C. It happens little by little. At one point, I said, “We already have four kids”—and I pressured Mark to have a vasectomy. We were still growing in our faith and praying the rosary. That was before there was Catholic radio and TV, but just by going before the Blessed Sacrament, I realized the mistake we had made, and I prayed for God's will to be done. Mark did not want to have another surgery. So, we both began praying. Shortly thereafter, I said, “God, I can't convince him, but You can.” And I continued going before the Blessed Sacrament. One day, Mark said, “I can't go in for a vasectomy reversal this month, but I can next month.” I asked what changed his mind, and he said that he had a dream in which we had more children. Amazingly, I had had the same dream! We ended up having four more biological children.

**I tell people, “I don't think everybody's supposed to have ten kids. It's whatever God's plan is for you. I don't know what that plan is, but you need to check with Him.” We should have checked with Him first and saved ourselves a lot of trouble.**

Somebody told me that we never would have known the difference—but I think on some spiritual level, I would have missed the fullness that God had for me. We had four more children post-reversal. I wrote and talked about it, and Mark and I spoke about it, and people sent us pictures of their children and said, “This is because we heard you talk.”

Even my bishop said, “Wow, you really let it all hang out!” But you can stand in the grocery store line and hear somebody talk about “getting fixed.” I didn't even know as a Catholic that it wasn't OK. We need to talk about it and all the blessings that came to us.

It's not always possible; it takes some action of God. But we put ourselves in God's hands. Later, we adopted two AIDS orphans—first one, and then two years later, his brother. They were or-

phans suffering from malnutrition. The first son we adopted had read a book about a boy who came to US, and he started praying that one day he could come here too. He'd never even met an American; it was a ridiculous prayer. He told me this story after being home with us for a week—and I realized we had been chosen to answer this prayer.

## PARENTHOOD AND FREE WILL

We have ten children, and there was a time when we thought we were doing it all right. I homeschooled or we sent them to Catholic schools. You think you will have all-in Catholic kids—but the cultural winds are blowing strong. Every one of our kids left home strong in the Catholic faith, but what you never expect can happen. Everybody is a work in progress. Everybody has free will, so some of my kids are no longer Catholic. And I have one who just joined the seminary. They are all over the board, and I've learned that we don't get to decide others' free will. It can be tough.

If your kids leave the faith, you will probably be judged by people who are doing their very best. Back when I was doing my best, if I saw kids who had left the faith, I thought the parents must have missed something. There are a lot of people in Catholic media whose kids have left the faith, and they don't like to talk about it. I don't blame them, because when I was raising my kids, if I heard a speaker say some of their kids had left the faith, I wanted to listen to somebody who was getting better results.

It's very humbling. When your kids are following the faith, you pat yourself on the back for doing the right thing. And then when one gives way to the culture, you think,

**“What did I do wrong?  
What did I miss?”**

You must surrender your kids to God and accept that you don't get to control it. You just love and pray for them even more than before.

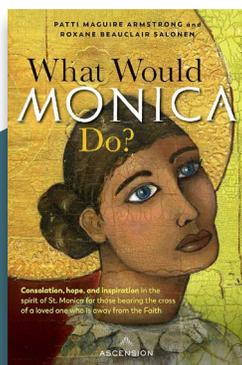
## WHAT WOULD MONICA DO?

I coauthored *What Would Monica Do?* with Roxane Beauclair Salonen. We created a book that we wanted and needed.

Conversations and debates with loved ones away from the faith don't always yield good results. Once you feel you're pushing, you need to stop. If you're pushing, they're going in the other direction. Once you realize they're not listening to you, stop and go deeper into your own prayer life. You've probably given them an article or a book or sat down to talk with them. But they might not listen, they might not read the book, they might ask, “Why are you judging me?” It's like St. Ambrose once told St. Monica: “You need to talk less to your son about God and more to God about your son.”

**You need to talk less to  
your son about God and  
more to God about your son.**

Initially, I didn't like St. Monica's story. She prayed for her son for seventeen years and got one conversion out of it. I wanted better results! But then our pastor noted that St. Augustine's books were still in print today, 1600-plus years later. The fruit of her prayer wasn't just one conversion; it was one of the greatest conversions! St. Augustine is one of the greatest evangelizers and theologians. He's a doctor of the Church. He has touched all of Christianity.



You can find *What Would Monica Do?*  
and Patti's other books at  
[www.PattiMaguireArmstrong.com](http://www.PattiMaguireArmstrong.com).

We have a private Facebook group (Catholic Parents: What Would Monica Do?) to support parents whose children are away from the faith. It is for parents praying for their loved ones. If you have walked that road, if all your friends' kids are still practicing, you want to be with people who understand.

Many of the people on that page didn't expect to ever be there. I never did. When Roxanne approached me about doing this book, I said, “No, I'm waiting until all my kids are back.” What a horrible book that would have been! That would have been me telling everybody how it works, when every kid is different, and every story is different.

## BEARING FRUIT IN SUFFERING

Prayer and fasting are very powerful. But take it one step further. When your children cause you pain, don't waste it—offer it to the Lord so they can receive it back as a gift. They can't stop that from coming. It's very powerful when we offer up sacrifices and our own suffering, united to the suffering of Christ, as a gift for them. The more they hurt you, the more you have to give them.

**Often, we're having conversations with people that we hope someone will have with our kids. So, don't slow down in what you're doing to love others. Love the world. Pray for others. If somebody hurts you, pray for them.** Venerable Sr. Mary Potter was devoted to the dying and wrote about something parents can do. She encouraged people to pray for the dying, because this is their last chance between heaven and hell. She said that if they are saved, they will pray for the fallen away children of those who prayed for them. This hit the nail on the head! I prayed for souls in Purgatory, but I didn't think about praying a daily Divine Mercy Chaplet or at least praying for those who are dying and for other people to be saved, just like we want our children to be saved.

North America

Atlantic Ocean

SPREADING THE GOSPEL IN



# ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES



South America



**BY BISHOP SCOTT MCCAIG**  
St. Vincent & the Grenadines  
Mission Team Member

Bishop Scott McCaig, CC, is from British Columbia, Canada. He served with NET Ministries USA, and then joined the Companions of the Cross. He obtained a master's of divinity from the University of Toronto. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1995. He served two terms as general superior for the Companions of the Cross. Bishop Scott has participated in missionary outreach to over fifteen countries. He also serves on the board of directors for both Catholic Renewal Ministries and Catholic Christian Outreach, where he is also involved in members' spiritual formation. He assists with training missionaries for NET Ministries of Canada and is a co-chaplain to Ottawa's Spiritual Motherhood of Priests Apostolate.

The Catholic population in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) has decreased from seven to three percent in the last decade due to aggressive proselytization efforts of various Protestant communities, two serious public scandals—one involving a prominent layman and the other a priest—and general religious indifference after the Covid-19 shutdown of churches. The charismatic renewal has always been a fringe reality in the country and has divided the clergy. The country's few prayer groups have largely died post-Covid.

Fr. Peter-Mary Emmanuel organized the charismatic conference and invited Renewal Ministries. He is originally from Ghana and had been studying for another community before deciding to accept the invitation of Bishop Gerard County, CSSp, to be ordained and incardinated for SVG. The country's renewed thrust of evangelization, renewal, and catechesis is largely due to his efforts. His commitment and zeal are exemplary. Bishop County has appointed him head of charismatic renewal and evangelization. Additionally, Miss Antonia Ross, a Catholic school teacher and the lay leader of the islands' charismatic renewal, is exceptionally dedicated and travelled with us throughout the mission.

The mission began with outreach to two of the islands of the Grenadines, both of which were hit hard by a hurricane last July. The rationale for these

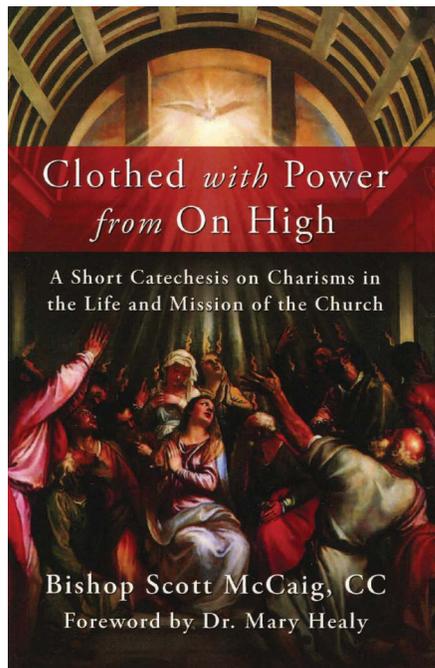
outreaches is that few if any of the people of these islands would travel to the main island of St. Vincent for the charismatic conference, as doing so is relatively expensive and inconvenient for the locals.

Our outreach began on the island of Canouan on Friday and lasted until closing Mass on Sunday. About one-hundred people attended, which is almost the island's entire Catholic population. At the request of Fr. Peter-Mary and the local pastor, I preached a series of talks on the themes of Hope in Jesus, Renewal in the Holy Spirit, Catholic Apologetics, and the Five Keys to Freedom—repentance and faith, forgiveness, renunciation, taking authority, and the Father's blessing.

Then, we flew back to the main island and traveled to the Diocesan Pastoral Centre in the capital city of Kingstown. On Monday, we made a one-day

outreach to a small parish on Bequia Island. Nineteen parishioners, largely very interested and engaged young adults, attended. I preached several talks on the kerygma and baptism in the Holy Spirit, and we wrapped up with a time of prayer ministry and Mass.

On Tuesday, I spoke to the clergy of the diocese at the pastoral centre in Kingstown. The bishop, eight priests, and four permanent deacons attended. Two priests stayed away due to rejection of the charismatic renewal and not wanting to participate in any discussion of it, further highlighting the division in the diocese. In the first session, I presented on the need for pastoral conversion and New Evangelization, based on relevant sections of *Redemptoris Missio* and *Evangelii Gaudium*. In the second session, I summarized my book ***Clothed With Power From on High***, in which I outlined the missionary ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* in Vatican II and the nature and purpose of the charisms in the Church. I included the theological basis of baptism in the Holy Spirit, its presence throughout Church history, and papal addresses on the subject. Both sessions were well-received, with attendees asking pertinent questions and having their confusion clarified. The bishop asked me to return in 2026 to continue formation on these topics.



The Catholic Charismatic Conference began on Friday. It was hosted in a local Catholic school and concluded with a candlelight procession and Mass on Sunday afternoon. The theme was Empowered by the Holy Spirit: Walking as Pilgrims of Hope. The other speaker was Debbie De Rosia from Trinidad and Tobago. Her message was excellent, and she carried a maternal authority that was very compelling. Her message centered around the need for signs and wonders, unity in the Spirit, love for the poor and needy, and dynamic evangelization using the charisms.

About three-hundred people attended each session, with numbers increasing near the end. The event was well organized with a very spirited music ministry that led worship in a traditional Caribbean style. At the bishop's invitation, I preached the three Masses, gave six talks, and led ministry sessions. I preached on themes of basic Catholic apologetics, personal prayer, and vibrant discipleship.

We received a very positive response to the conference. Catholic Vincentians have been desperate for something like this for a long time. One young woman attended out of interest, sang in the choir, and announced that she will be leaving the Church of Latter-Day Saints to receive instruction in the Catholic faith based on what she had heard and experienced.

Fr. Peter-Mary and Miss Ross are heroically leading the charge to bring renewal and evangelization to the country. This small mission field is worthy of our support.

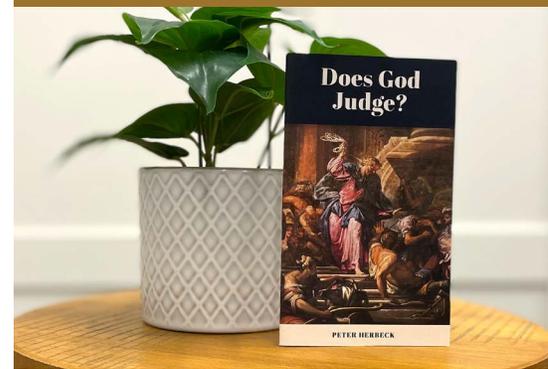
Get Bishop Scott's book ***Clothed With Power From on High***  
[www.renewalministries.net/shop](http://www.renewalministries.net/shop)



## PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ For those who have fallen away from the Church, that they may return to her fullness.
- ▶ That the Word of God would continue to reach around the world, bringing individuals and nations closer to the Lord.
- ▶ For the prayer intentions of all our supporters and their family members, especially as they face the challenges of illness and economic uncertainty.

## NEW BOOKLET from Peter Herbeck



Get your first copy **FREE** at:  
[www.renewalministries.net/dg](http://www.renewalministries.net/dg)

Does God judge? It's a question no one wants to consider, but from Genesis to Revelation, the question is present and is one we all need to face. We all will appear before Jesus; it is in the calendar of our lives.

This powerful booklet by Peter Herbeck is intended to wake us up! *Does God Judge?* will help its readers discover a precious gift—an awareness that leads to conversion and a healthy fear of God.

# EVENTS

APRIL 2025 View complete event list at [renewalministries.net/events](http://renewalministries.net/events).

**Brighton, MI**  
**St. Patrick Parish Mission**  
April 1  
Pete Burak  
Details: [stpatrikcatholicparish.org](http://stpatrikcatholicparish.org)

**Houston, TX**  
**Houston Women's Conference**  
April 4-5  
Debbie Herbeck  
Details: [houstoncwc.net](http://houstoncwc.net)

**Brighton, MI**  
**St. Mary Magdalene Parish Mission**  
April 6  
Peter Herbeck  
Details: [saintmarymagdalen.org](http://saintmarymagdalen.org)

**Charlotte, NC**  
**Parish Mission**  
April 6-8  
Pete Burak & Rachel Herbeck  
Details: [stmarknc.org](http://stmarknc.org)

## Wisdom from the Saints

*"Have patience with all things, but first with yourself. Never confuse your mistakes with your value as a human being. You are a perfectly valuable person, creative and worthwhile, simply because you exist. And no amount of triumphs or tribulations can ever change that."*

// St. Francis de Sales

**Pinckney, MI**  
**Marriage Retreat\***  
April 11-12  
Peter & Debbie Herbeck

**Austin, TX**  
**Legatus\***  
April 16  
Rachel Herbeck

**Steubenville, OH**  
**Recording Franciscan University Presents with Fr. Dave Pivonka\***  
April 23  
Ralph Martin

**Phoenix, AZ**  
**Blessed is She Retreat**  
April 25-26  
Rachel Herbeck  
Details: [blessedisshenet/products/new-a-blessed-is-she-retreat-2025](http://blessedisshenet/products/new-a-blessed-is-she-retreat-2025)

**Wixom, MI**  
**Talk at St. Catherine Academy\***  
April 29  
Ralph Martin

\* Not open to the public.

## MISSION

**Mexico**  
April 22-29  
Jim Murphy & Team



## THE CHOICES WE FACE

'The Choices We Face' is the longest-running Catholic television program in the world! Each episode explores an important topic concerning the faith. Watch these and other episodes on our website at:

[www.renewalministries.net/the-choices-we-face](http://www.renewalministries.net/the-choices-we-face)

### APRIL GUESTS & TOPICS:

#### The Call to Holiness

(04/06/24)

Ralph Martin speaks at a 2024 priests' retreat in Uganda about the universal call to holiness and how to progress on the spiritual journey.

#### Holy Silence

(04/13/25) // Fr. Basil Nortz, ORC

Fr. Basil Nortz discusses the supernatural powers at work in the world and how to practice holy silence in our daily lives.

#### There's Always More

(04/20/25) // Sr. Mary Gabriel Devlin, SV

Sr. Mary Gabriel shares her faith journey, from falling in love with Jesus to her vocation with the Sisters of Life.

#### Transformation of the Heart

(04/27/25) // Luke LeTourneau, OFS

Live Vertical Cofounder Luke LeTourneau discusses his struggle with loss and alcoholism, and the powerful way Jesus broke into his life.



Renewal Ministries is a Catholic ministry committed to renewal and evangelization in the Church. It seeks to proclaim Jesus Christ through its TV, radio, and social media outreaches, as well as through books, conferences, retreats, and other international evangelistic events.

Scripture references in the newsletter are from the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

### STAY CONNECTED WITH US:



[youtube.com/@renewalministries](https://youtube.com/@renewalministries)



[@CatholicRenewalMinistries](https://www.facebook.com/CatholicRenewalMinistries)



[instagram.com/renewalministries](https://www.instagram.com/renewalministries)



[subsplash.com/renewalministries/app](https://subsplash.com/renewalministries/app)



Visit us at: [www.renewalministries.net](http://www.renewalministries.net)

#### UNITED STATES

**Chairman of the Board** Deacon Dan Foley  
**President** Ralph Martin

#### CANADA

**Episcopal Advisor**  
Cardinal Thomas Collins, Toronto, ON

#### Chairman of the Board

Monsignor Gregory Smith, Vancouver, BC

#### NEWSLETTER

**Editor** Heather Schultz  
**Design** Emily Bachelor

© 2025 by Renewal Ministries

[www.renewalministries.net](http://www.renewalministries.net)

UNITED STATES | P.O. Box 491, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 • phone 734-662-1730 CANADA | P.O. Box 400, Station U Toronto, ON M8Z 5Y8 • phone 647-559-8384